

**For Immediate Release:**

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**County Executive Chris Abele Announces Major  
Reform to County Vacation and Sick Leave Policies**

***Rules Aim to Prevent Abuse While Preserving Ability  
of Employees to Take Vacation, Sick Leave***

MILWAUKEE – With a goal of preventing abuse and saving tax dollars, County Executive Chris Abele announced today six executive orders and proposed ordinance changes to reform vacation and sick leave policies.

“If anything over the last week is clear, it’s that the current system for handling sick leave and vacation time is broken and in need of serious reform,” said Abele. “I look forward to working with the County Board’s personnel committee to get the vacation and sick leave policies under control.”

County Executive Abele announced he will draft the following executive orders to reform the system effective immediately:

- **Limit vacation carryover** - Currently, all county employees can carry over 50 percent of their vacation allotment balance into the new year, which is paid out to employees upon retirement. This order would direct a change to a maximum of a 7-day carryover from one year to the next.
- **Move to anniversary date crediting system** - In order to assist implementation of the order above, the County Executive will also direct DAS to move from a calendar year vacation credit system to an anniversary date system. This means that, rather than every county employee receiving all their vacation at the beginning of the year (in January), starting in 2012 every employee will receive their new bank of vacation credit on their hire anniversary date. Employees would receive vacation on a prorated basis during the transition to the new system.

The County Executive will also propose the following ordinance changes:

- **Cap accrual of sick time to a maximum of six work weeks (30 days)** – Under the current system county employees accrue unlimited amount of sick time – which the County is obligated to pay out to employees in cash or for health insurance upon retirement. This proposed ordinance would cap the amount of time one can accrue at 30 days, which totals six weeks. Employees would continue to earn sick leave at the current rate of 3.7 hours per pay period.
- **Change payout calculation for sick time at the time of retirement** - Currently sick time balance is paid out upon retirement at the pay rate of an employee’s last position, regardless of the time spent in the position. The County Executive is proposing to require that sick time payout be based instead on a salary average from the employees’ three consecutive earning years.

- **Returning employees: vacation credit received after first six months** - Currently, when someone returns to County employment she or he receives vacation days immediately upon return to the County. This proposed ordinance change would make it so that a returning employee must wait 6 months to receive any vacation credit and then will receive one-half of what their normal, full-year entitlement for a year.
- **Returning employees: gradual restoration of previous sick allowance balance**  
Employees returning to the County would have their previous sick allowance balance gradually restored 20 percent of their prior sick allowance immediately upon return to employment and then 20 percent more every 6 months. The full amount would thus be restored 2 years after re-employment. However, the restoration would be subject to the 120 day accrual cap.